dialect, local laws, customs, practices etc, of the tribals of the concerned States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) to (c) Against the sanctioned strength of 19 Judges/Additional Judges, 16 Judges/Additional Judges are in position in the Guwahati High Court. 3 Judges on the strength of the Guwahati High Court are functioning in outside High Courts. After the Triennial review of Judge strength in 2003,8 more posts of Additional Judges have been approved for the Gauhati High Court which are yet to be filled up. However, pursuant to the Superme Court Judgement of October 6,1993 read with their Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998, the process of initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges of a High Court lies with the Cief Justice of that High Court. The Government has been requesting the Chief Justices of the High Courts, Chief Ministers and the Governors of the States, including the North Eastern States, from time to time, to initiate proposals for filling up of the vacancies which are existing as well as those anticipated during the next six months.

Allotment of Judges to the Benches is decided by the Chief Justice of the Guwahati High Court.

Registration of marriages

1857. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to make registration of all marriages mandatory irrespective of religion to protect interests of women;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) As the subject matter "Marriage and divorce" falls under entry 5 of the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India, it is considered appropriate to allow the State Government to bring in

necessary changes if the conditions obtaining in the States allow such changes before any Parliamentary legislation could be considered. Some of the State Governments have made laws for uniform compulsory registration of marriages. However, the National Population Policy, 2000 has set the target of compulsory registration of marriages, by 2010.

Expenses in Conducting Election of State Assemblies

1858. SHRI S.S.AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Election Commission (EC) of India has been granted autonomy in formulating their financial budget and incurring expenses;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether all expenses relating to conduct of elections, including cost of forces, deployments, media publicity/announcements, administrative and Central observers' deployment costs, for State Assemblies are incurred by the Election Commission;

(d) if so, State-wise details of expenses incurred by EC towards conduct of Assembly elections held during 2003 and 2004;

(e) if liability of EC is limited to certain portion(s) of the total poll expenses, the details thereof; and

(f) the details of remaining expenses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) and (b) The budget of election Commission of India is reflected under Demand No. 62 and included in the Detailed Demands for Grants of Ministry of Law & Justice and voted by the Parliament.

(c) Expenses relating to conduct of elections, including cost of forces, deployments, media publicity/announcements, administrative and central observers' deployment costs are met by the State Governments concerned. However, as per Government of India's Policy, conduct of General Elections to Lok Sabha, expenses are reimbursed fully by the Central Government; for election of the State Leigslative Assemblies expenses are fully borne